

REMARKS

Claims 2-18, 21 and 23-27 are presently pending in this application. Claims 2-18, 21, and 23 have been amended to more particularly define the invention. Claims 24-27 have been added to assure Applicant the degree of protection to which his invention entitles him.

The Office Action states that the Applicant has canceled claims 3, 5, 10, 11, 14, 21, and 23. This is not correct. Claims 3, 5, 10, 11, 14, 21, and 23 are withdrawn as directed to a non-elected invention, but they have not been canceled. New claim 24 is generic to all the claims in the application. Upon allowance of claim 24, Applicant will be entitled to allowance of all the claims, including the presently withdrawn claims.

It is noted that the claim amendments are made only to assure grammatical and idiomatic English and improved form under United States practice, and are not made to distinguish the invention over the prior art or narrow the claims or for any statutory requirements of patentability. Further, Applicant specifically states that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Claims 2, 4, 6-9, 12-13, 15 and 17-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Applicant's admitted prior art. Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As exemplified by generic claim 24, Applicant's invention is directed to an optical fiber tape which includes a fiber array adapted to be connected to an optical waveguide, a fixation section, and a tape fiber. The tape fiber includes a plurality of tape sections. The

tape sections are fixed to the fiber array. The optical fibers are separated at a position between the fiber array and the fixation section and are fixed to the fixation section.

In one embodiment, exemplified by claim 2, the optical fibers are separated into a predetermined number of optical fiber groups, which are smaller in number than the plurality of optical fibers and which are fixed to the fixation section.

In a second embodiment, exemplified by claim 3, the optical fibers are separated and arranged parallel to one another and are formed into a tape which is fixed to the fixation section.

The admitted prior art discloses an optical fiber tape including a fiber array adapted to be connected to an optical waveguide, and a tape fiber including a plurality of tape sections. The admitted prior art does not show or suggest a fixation section. Thus, the admitted prior art does not show or suggest fixing the optical fibers, either separately, in groups, or as a tape, to a fixation section.

The fixation section enables the optical fibers to be arranged in sequence from fiber serial number 1 to fiber serial number 48 more expeditiously, thus enabling connection of the optical fibers to other equipment more expeditiously.

It is accordingly urged that the claimed invention distinguishes over the admitted prior art in a non-obvious manner and that the claims are allowable.

Claims 2, 4, 6-9, 12-13 and 15-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first and second paragraphs. The above amendments overcome these rejections.

The Office Action objected to the drawings with the contention that various terms in the claims needed to be shown in the drawings. All the positively recited elements in the

amended claims are shown in the drawings. Terms in the claims which only set out the environment in which the claimed invention might be used (e.g., the optical waveguide) are not positively recited elements, and so are not required to be in the drawings.

The Office Action objected to Figures 1 and 5 due to a typographical error in a legend in each figure. These have been corrected.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 2-27, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and that the application is in condition for allowance. Such action would be appreciated.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

To the extent necessary, Applicant petitions for an extension of time under 37 CFR §1.136. Please charge any shortage in the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date:

May 10, 2009


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FIG. 1
 PRIOR ART



